

Letter to the Editor: Resources agency head backs lake restoration

Mike Chrisman, California Secretary for Resources
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As California secretary for resources, I write to commend the Union-Tribune for its support of the agency's Salton Sea Ecosystem Restoration Plan's early start actions ("Salton sink/A plan to manage lake's demise makes sense," Editorial, Aug. 13). As the editorial notes, the legislation, Senate Bill 187 sponsored by Sen. Denise Ducheny, D-San Diego, is well deserving of passage and would provide \$47 million in Proposition 84 funding to begin restoration activity in and around the state's largest lake.

The Union-Tribune is accurate to point out that the Salton Sea cannot simply be ignored. While many environmental concerns including habitat restoration, air quality and water quality are issues that drive the early start process, we were also bound by law to submit a restoration plan to the Legislature. A 32-member stakeholder group worked for nearly three years to prepare a draft on a preferred alternative. Two additional months were spent working with key local stakeholders and the Salton Sea Authority to incorporate as much local input as possible into the final preferred alternative that was released to the Legislature in late May.

Our collective efforts to date represent broad agreement on a plan that is adaptable, flexible and sustainable. It's a plan that was created by many people and organizations working together for the future of the Salton Sea region. And it is a region whose future is of critical importance to all Californians.

While we may not all agree today on every aspect of this plan, it does not preclude any idea along the way from being part of an eventual Salton Sea restoration. By working together, we've established a process to ensure that future generations may realize the benefits of our collective 75-year vision.